

E/Isberg, D 10/24/89

Non-Offensive Defense
(Defense which is Structurally In Capable of offense)

See Christopher Jones ✓
in "Protection from outside,"
"Not every weapon can be used for defense - while every weapon can be used for offense" (K. Knifer) Defense

\nato\bas.nod
October 24, 1989

Comments on Bulletin of Atomic Scientists issue, September 1988, on Nonoffensive Defense (NOD).

Virtually any weapon can be used for 1st use (offensive) but a weapon that cannot survive the other side's 1st strike cannot be used for 2nd strike (airplanes). Of you the Broughton letter weapons that can be used only for 1st strike look like you're playing a 1st strike game.

Yazov's article in this issue does not contradict the warning in International Security the same month that Yazov might not agree, fully or at all, with the civilian advocates of NOD. There is no hint in his discussion of the special theses of NOD; "defense sufficiency" is completely vague, in his version.

(However, he does say that "at a third stage" of reductions, reductions could be made which would leave both sides with such forces and weapons as would be sufficient for defense but insufficient for offensive purposes," and later he says that defense sufficiency implies that neither side would be in a position to take offensive action while building up its defense capability. This does not support the claim mentioned above that Yazov still emphasizes the need for "counteroffensive" action.)

Yazov here emphasizes that there can be no unilateral reductions, since both sides are already at "approximate military parity." The reduction of troops by 500,000 is put at a second stage, and only mutually; tanks are not to be reduced before reduction of 500,000 men and over 10,000 tanks to be offered by Gorbachev a few months later, on December 7, 1988

Yazov, calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons by 2000, says: "Indeed, it is impossible to say that a nuclear conflict will translate into a catastrophe for all, while at the same time insisting on keeping nuclear weapons as a means to insure peace."

This does seem well-taken logically, especially if "keeping nuclear weapons as a means to insure peace"--i.e., to deter aggression, war," not merely to deter nuclear attack--is understood as "using nuclear weapons, by threatening and preparing to initiate nuclear war."

The USG position under Reagan and Bush is: "Nuclear war cannot be won, and must never be fought; and if we are losing a non-nuclear war, of the historically-familiar (and survivable) sort in Europe, we will initiate nuclear war, the kind that cannot be won and must never be fought."

VS. NARA

Comments on Anders Boserup article, "A Way to Undermine Hostility."

Most of SDI is 1st strike only. (Because the equipment parts are not survivable if hit first) This SDI cannot be used 1st use - against launchers/airheads (maybe launchers + missiles + warheads) - against launchers/airheads (maybe launchers + missiles + warheads)

See DE on Space-based missiles (Discussed 2/86) Pike etc. Based on Space-based missiles (Discussed 2/86) Pike etc.

Why was it necessary--as one senses it was--for the Soviet Union to be the first to take unilateral steps in the direction of NOD?

One reason: It is the SU that has had the blitzkrieg posture, the clearly offensively oriented doctrine and capability for seizing and holding territory outside its present borders.

Even if Soviet specialists could believe--on the basis of Soviet history and traditional doctrine--that this capability was "defensive" in intent, as the Soviets said, it provided a strong basis for Cold Warriors to claim, and even believe, that it reflected aggressive aims: being thwarted primarily by fear of nuclear escalation. *2 C. B.*

answer: same!
Why was there a buildup and "modernization" of this offensive capability in the '70's and '80's? I haven't seen, yet, a strong answer to this. Surely it wasn't an increase in the perceived NATO threat. The most plausible answer so far is a "Model II" explanation: military bureaucracy at work, Brezhnev having given the military services their head, in a strategic context in which they saw non-nuclear blitzkrieg as a way to achieve objectives--"if a war were forced on them"--before a nuclear response was forthcoming. Or at least, this was an available rationale for buying all the new toys they really wanted.

(Similarly, the B-1 was recently explained, by Kotz, as a result of Laird's giving USAF its head to spend its assigned budget, under Nixon: so they spent it on what they really wanted.)

At the same time, the Soviet Strategic Forces were emulating the US in MIRVs and accuracy, along with their heavier missiles, thus leapfrogging the US in counterforce capability against land-based missiles. ~~Whatever the rationale--technological parity, damage-limiting, preemption, deterring US FU, or simple "modernization"--this could be and was described as aggressive first-strike capability, and was the basis for US programs from the MX to D5 and Midgetman.~~

Moreover, this strategic "superiority" (actually, parity, in counterforce capability) was joined to "conventional superiority" in Europe (which was also problematic, but almost universally perceived) which had an unmistakably offensive cast, and which was also accompanied by a buildup (from almost nothing) of amphibious and naval "force projection" capability outside Europe.

All of this provided an all-too-plausible basis for a "new Cold War" under Carter and Reagan, with a huge buildup of non-nuclear as well as nuclear forces.

But, there was an asymmetry in the NATO/Warsaw Pact confrontation that did not exist in the strategic nuclear confrontation, which was largely symmetrical in capabilities. It

K. Beante/L. B. 1958-61 (62 efforts) "aggressive"
the Springer 1964-81

was the Warsaw Pact alone that had a major land offensive capability. NATO had a growing capability for a deep air offensive, which was destabilizing and encouraged preemption by either side in a crisis, but this was not accompanied by a major capability to take and hold territory in East Europe.

Moreover, a major premise of the Cold War, on the Western side, was the latent desire of the Soviets to invade and occupy West Europe, on the (plausible, if misleading) model of Soviet occupation of East Europe in World War II. Thus, a widespread interpretation of the expensive Soviet modernization program and blitzkrieg strategy in aggressive terms was not just a hypothetical, "worst-case" interpretation, but for many, both inside and outside Western defense establishments, a real belief.

No one, on the other hand, could imagine the NATO Alliance deciding to invade the Soviet Union, or even East Europe. Soviet long-run fears of a resurgent Germany were rarely given much weight in the West, even in defense circles (this was a recurrent error, even in intelligence estimates, in interpreting and predicting Soviet posture). And even the Soviets probably gave this little concern in the short- and mid-term, so long as Germany was closely tied to the US.

Probably the contingency that both defense establishments took seriously was an East German uprising--possibly following an uprising elsewhere in East Europe--in which West Germans were tempted to become militarily involved. I would guess that it was to deter or preempt this that the Soviet blitzkrieg offensive into West Germany was prepared.

And I would further guess that this is the best guess of the US intelligence community; and that these are the circumstances most likely to give rise to Western fears of a Soviet attack. Thus, from a military point of view, the NATO posture--with its proposed modernization--is intended to deter, preempt or counter a Soviet response to, or preemption of, a West German move into East Germany to side with rebelling East Germans, perhaps against or perhaps alongside DRV armed forces.

That comes close to hypothesizing that NATO's vast military posture, including its nuclear first-use threat and the strategic first-strike posture that lies behind it, is primarily designed to make the world safe for West German intervention into an East German uprising: even though we might deplore, oppose, and plan to do our best to prevent such intervention in the actual event!

What else, really?

Of course, one could imagine other ways of lowering the likelihood of such a Soviet response. One way would have been to forego West German rearmament, in the Fifties and after. But

according to Jerry Sanders, that was seen as an urgent need almost entirely for economic reasons in 1950 and later, in the interests of German and West European recovery. (It was a way of getting dollars to Germany out of Congress, after the expiration of Marshall Plan, via offshore procurement and US troop spending).

Later, NATO served a variety of US purposes--including keeping Germany divided, with West Germany solidly in the West under US tutelage, and keeping a solid foothold for US trade and investment in Europe--which thereby depended on a well-armed Germany.

Such a Germany inescapably posed a threat and real potential of intervention in East Europe (primarily, East Germany), such as the Soviet counter-threat against West Germany--if that is what the Soviet forces have been--inescapably posed a larger threat to the Alliance.

Another way of reducing the likelihood of this scenario would be to reduce the likelihood of an East German rebellion against their regime: either by heightening repression or by satisfying complaints, political and economic, against the regime. (The situation may be increasingly dangerous at the moment, when neither approach is being followed, and discontent is growing explosively).

*now, later:
now 9, 89*

A third way, of which Horst Afheldt was one of the first advocates, is to change the nature of West German armaments and organization, to make a large-scale movement into East Germany highly unlikely or impossible. Indeed, Afheldt focusses on changes in West German posture--as distinct from NATO strategy as a whole--that would have a number of types of advantages, as much political as military. (pp 24-28) But these are explicitly advantages for Germany and for the European members of the Alliance, not for the US, which would see its own interests damaged by the change.

But those who would oppose such a change for political reasons would have a plausible military argument to make against it, more openly. Against a major blitzkrieg capability on the Soviet side--if it remained or adapted and grew--it is hard to make NOD look adequate: at least, compared to the deterrent threat of nuclear escalation (from which Afheldt and others were particularly trying to escape: with its continued American dominance, as well as its risk of actual catastrophe).

Nor was it easy to believe that the Soviets would imitate a NATO/German unilateral move toward NOD, so long as their traditional, institutionalized doctrine of "offensive defense" remained dominant. And that seemed likely to be forever--given their World War II experience and their reliance on it--despite any "new thinking" on the part of their civilian leadership and advisors.

| So long as Soviet troops remained in East Europe and East

Nov Dec 7, 1988

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Germany--to hold on to them--they seemed likely to have lots of tanks there with them, with an offensive doctrine. Indeed, the supposed threat from NATO was helpful in legitimizing the presence of the troops at all--even if their real purpose was imperial repression--and the offensive doctrine confirmed the public rationale. That is, so long as this imperial purpose remained, it was plausible to expect that the Soviets would be very reluctant and slow to admit that the threat from NATO had changed, or to respond to this, even if the Afheldt reorganization was adopted unilaterally.

It did not seem to be in the Soviet imperial interests to recognize that there was no offensive threat from West Germany. Even if the Germans changed their posture, the Soviets might not, at least for a long time. Yet unless they changed their own posture, it was hard to feel confident that the Afheldt scheme was reliably deterrent.

Still less did it seem likely that the Soviets would make such a change themselves, unilaterally. Even a willingness to discuss such a change, bilaterally, was not compelling evidence that they would really go along with such changes. As late as September, 1988, analysts were seizing on statements as evidence that the Soviets were interested only in the propaganda value of entering such discussions, and had no intention of following through.

Only the immediate, large, unilateral moves that Gorbachev actually made in December could make it convincingly clear that mutual non-threatening defensive postures were a real possibility.

One side had to go first. It was not going to be NATO. Virtually everyone would have agreed: it was still less likely to be the Soviets.

(Here was a great contrast to the test ban; on this point of conventional military doctrine, almost no one seems to have imagined that Gorbachev could have his way, if he wanted unilateral action in this direction. And Yazov's article in the BAS in September indicated strong military opposition to such a course (though in retrospect, it may be that that was simply the Soviet line at the time, Gorbachev having not yet decided to make it unilateral)).

What has happened? Among other things:

--Either the military have become willing to give up their capability for low-warning blitzkrieg, in the belief that it is not after all, essential to Soviet security, or may not even be advantageous on balance;

--Or civilian leadership, on civilian advice, has a far greater ability to determine military security policy than any American

*AKA:
Concise better here*

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cf. for USSR! But 6 years "1991" (see K after C-II
2 years later and JFK)

experts earlier imagined. (If this is the case, it could still be a short-run phenomenon, perhaps unstable: encouraging a form of military takeover, especially if this is encouraged for other reasons as well).

--In the latter case, or if the situation is something in between these two, the civilian power probably rests on the observed decline in military influence and prestige under Gorbachev. What led to this? Afghanistan? The KAL and Rust incidents? I haven't seen an explicit explanation of this development.

--In the former case, both military and civilians may have, in effect, come to agree with the "cautious optimists" among American analysts of NATO, who conclude that the highly expensive blitzkrieg capability simply wouldn't deliver in wartime: that it would be stalemated by NATO, even if it didn't trigger nuclear war.

This is suggested by the frequent Soviet statements that they regard the two sides as now having approximate equivalence in capability, rough parity, just as these Western analysts maintain. The Soviets may, in short, believe what they are saying. (And they may well be right).

And/or the blitzkrieg strategy may have been seen as highly likely to trigger nuclear war, despite being designed to forestall this. (Reagan's early attitude could have been discouraging on this point, the Soviet strategy having been launched much earlier). Both the Reagan/Bush (! see Scheer) enthusiasm for warfighting capability, and the threat of loss of control, may have actually done a deterrent job on this strategy! (Just as Star Wars, equally reckless and crazy, may have shocked the Soviets into reconsidering their whole approach of emulating US strategic developments. I never said that madness couldn't "work").

General Milshtein, as I recall, emphasized the first point.

--It is not clear that the Soviets necessarily saw these unilateral changes, even if they went fairly far, as compromising their military position in East Europe, against revolt. But in any case, Gorbachev has clearly accepted faster and more radical change in the relation of the SU and East Europe than anyone imagined possible even months ago.

Certainly rebellions remain possible; if anything, more likely than before, especially in East Germany. It would seem that he is less concerned to deter or preempt West German intervention in such a rebellion.

That suggests very strongly that he does not plan to use Soviet forces to put down such a revolt, if it should occur, or to fight DDR forces, if they should side with the revolt. Certainly he no longer means to deter Western intervention in the same way,

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by preparing or threatening to preempt offensively into West Germany.

Either he concluded that that is too costly in interaction with the West and/or too dangerous in the event, or that he can deal with the revolt more safely and effectively in other ways: perhaps crushing rebellion while holding off Western intervention in other ways; or forestalling rebellion by timely concessions and withdrawal of Soviet troops, acquiescing in a change of regime.

Perhaps he came to the conclusion that the contingency of Western intervention was over-rated and was highly unlikely, even in the not-so-unlikely event of an East German uprising. (Even without a restructuring of German forces to be purely defensive). He may have felt that the likelihood of this contingency was too small to base an entire Warsaw Pact posture on it, expensive as that was, with the effect that had on the arms race and on relations with East and West Europe.

He would ^{be} all the more likely to reach this conclusion, the more he ~~calculated~~ lead to a bad end that actually carrying out these plans would not be an effective deterrent. But he could have come to fear his own loss of control over events in that case (just as Khrushchev, at the height of the Cuban Crisis, must have come to fear his own loss of control over Castro's anti-aircraft and his own SAMs, and conceivably over the MRBMs he had sent to Cuba).

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too
much
to R?* The Soviet forces in East Germany, equipped, positioned, trained and indoctrinated in readiness for a rapid, preemptive blitzkrieg, may have come to look all too unstable to Gorbachev as a deterrent, precisely as the prospect of an uprising that he couldn't prevent or control has come to seem more likely in the short run.

Reducing and hobbling those forces might reduce deterrence of Western intervention a little in that case; it could reduce by a lot the probability of catastrophe in case that deterrence seemed close to failing.

Was the US and NATO ever likely to give up entirely the threat or capability to intervene in support of East European revolt against Soviet-dominated regimes? (Even if they were unlikely actually to carry out such threats, deliberately). I think that would be as hard as to give a formal commitment that they would under no circumstances intervene; either would be seen as accepting Soviet domination as legitimate and permanent, and as, in effect, underwriting it and collaborating with it.

Just today, a review of a book of Truman's private reflections, edited by his daughter, reveals his strong

condemnation of Eisenhower's passivity during the Hungarian revolt (the results of which were reversed today, as Hungary declared itself a republic and condemned Soviet intervention, on the 33d anniversary of the "popular uprising"!)) Few have ever said Eisenhower should have intervened militarily; but no President could allow himself to be seen as condoning such a Soviet action.

Thus, it is questionable that NATO would really restructure itself radically so long as the possibility of Soviet major repression in East Europe remained. I am suggesting here--what I have never seen stated explicitly--that there is wide public support for an implicit function of NATO offensive capability: posing a tacit threat of intervention, as a deterrent. (Just as in the case of NATO's FU threat, the public certainly wants this threat to be a bluff, which would not be carried out. But they can still want the preparations to exist, to make the bluff more effective).

I suspect that even with a reduced Soviet threat against the West, there will be no fundamental change in NATO offensive capability--and thus, perhaps, in NATO FU posture, designed to deter any SU response to Western intervention in East Europe--so long as there remains a significant Soviet threat of repressive action in East Europe. This would require some combination of changed Soviet relationship--which is now in course of evolving--and reduced Soviet presence in East Europe. we!

Shevardnadze's speech reported today in which he spoke of possible dissolution of both military pacts--as well as withdrawal of all Soviet overseas bases by 2000--may have pointed to a Soviet willingness to withdraw all Soviet forces from East Europe, presumably in connection with some form of assurance that Western military forces would not intervene in East European affairs, and that these states would not form an unfriendly Western military alliance. NOW. 4-90-15

Will the Soviets persist in what is now perceived to be their demand that Eastern states not leave the Warsaw Pact? Or will their attitude be more, that (like Finland) they can be outside the Warsaw Pact but cannot join NATO?! (There was speculation by Dan Rather tonight that tomorrow Gorbachev in Finland may hint that Finlandization is the desired prospect in East Europe as a whole).

What has precluded, till now, the very notion of US and SU analysts working together to design "mutual nonprovocative deterrence" in the strategic field, or mutual minimum deterrence, is, among other things, that the Western Community of strategic analysts believed that the US and NATO must maintain some form of first-strike threat--despite its "provocative," destabilizing aspect--to counter Soviet offensive conventional superiority in Europe.

With the latter eliminated--even unilaterally, prior to much change on the Western side--the former comes to seem practical and realistic, even though difficult to achieve, given the other, tacit motives for US first-strike "modernization".

MXC

In fact, the other motives being relatively covert or unacknowledged, it becomes hard to rationalise a refusal to take part in such a mutual design effort, given evident Soviet willingness to participate and even lead the way unilaterally toward such a result.

Prior to the Soviet unilateral moves in Europe, it was perhaps inevitable that despite all talk of "stability" in SALT and START, actual negotiations and agreements neither aimed at or achieved real improvements in stability. On the contrary, a strongly-improving US first-strike potential was carefully protected by American negotiators from the start, excluding MIRV, accuracy, the Pershing II and the MX and D5 from bargaining, with the effect that even START is in some respects destabilizing. This protection of US "modernization" necessarily left Soviet first-strike capabilities, such as the SS-18, largely intact.

The time has come to put strategic negotiations--and before that, discussions--on the same basis on the emerging basis initiated by Gorbachev for conventional forces in Europe. The focus must be on selective destruction of specific, destabilizing capabilities that encourage preemption. There must be critical reconsideration, based on CANDOR, not only of such concepts as "Military victory" (Kokoshin, p. 37) but of such notions as "damage-limiting, preemption, decapitation."

On the non-nuclear side: prior to December 7, 1988, it seemed close to inconceivable that the Soviet military would agree to or implement a radically changed defensive posture, even on a mutual basis, let alone unilaterally. Moreover, US civilian officials wouldn't really want it, even on a mutual basis.

Nor did these theories look convincing on a unilateral basis for NATO, facing Soviet offensive capabilities (and the appearance of aggressive intent these fostered): so even European pressure for such changes looked improbable. And the European analysts favoring this approach talked only of unilateral strategy: in effect, they despaired of Soviet reciprocation, let alone unilateral initiatives (which were never mentioned as a possibility by either European or US advocates of these concepts).

SPT?

Their approach had, and could have, very little influence; it could scarcely attract attention. (I could muster little interest in it, till I heard from von Hippel of Gorbachev's interest; then I tried, unsuccessfully, to get Hal Harvey to emphasize the possibilities of mutual change).

1991 - 1 in Moscow
(first after camp)
last chance

2 yrs after this paper

[Thought this morning: How would the Soviets really justify their exclusive preoccupation with a blitzkrieg strategy--or even, any major attention to that approach at all?

After all, what is their notion of how a ground war in Europe would be likely to come about? Would hostilities commence with a major West German, US or NATO armored assault into East Germany, or East Europe as a whole? Would this be likely development, after initial engagements? (Prior to Sam Huntington's proposals!)

Is it conceivable that NATO would decide, without a crisis or in the midst of a crisis, to launch an invasion, say a surprise attack, into East Germany, or to liberate East Europe, or to occupy the Soviet Union?

So why are the plans that the Soviets rehearse in exercises and which shape their deployments and equipment and training designed to counter Barbarossa again, this time starting from positions in East Germany?

The NATO strategy, insane as it is in its readiness to use tactical nuclear weapons, is at least addressed to the challenge posed by forces that actually exist and to an enemy strategy that is regularly exercised in full view of their surveillance. How in the world do Soviet exercises explain the origins of the war they are preparing to fight? (Assuming they do not understand themselves to be rehearsing for a surprise Soviet attack).

NATO plans assume that the Soviets mobilize first--by five to seven days--and attack first. What do Soviet plans and exercises assume? If they agree with NATO plans, how do they explain this?

Presumably the contingency they really worry about is the same one that Western analysts see as possible: movement across the border of East Germany of West German forces (possibly accompanied by US, but possibly against the wishes of the US, or even of West German political authorities, let alone the rest of NATO) to oppose repression of an East German popular uprising by DDR forces or Soviet forces.

Could not, should not, such a potential incursion by West German or even US forces be engaged within East Germany, by superior Soviet forces, without any need for a counterattack, early or ever, into West Germany?

This concept doesn't rely on "purely defensive" operations, whether by militia or territorial forces or by armored forces; it merely foregoes counter-crossborder operations into the territory of the attacking force. It doesn't even violate the desideratum, "fight on the territory of others." East Germany is others' territory, from the Soviet point of view.

(What was of talk to L.S. USA?)

In fact, if East Germans started the crisis by revolting, and called in Western help, why spare them the full weight of the ensuing military operations. "They asked for it!" If the result of German ingratitude were a final solution of the German problem, by means of non-nuclear or even tactical nuclear warfare, would many Russians cry?

Why would the principal ground fighting have to be in West Germany? (NATO airstrikes would be heavily in East Germany anyway). And why would plans be made for this case--either to deter it, or to respond to it--that aim at Europe-wide operations? Why aim to occupy any part of West Germany; or, more than a strip of it at most; or at the very most, all of Germany? (I am really questioning the prudence or necessity of Soviet forces entering West Germany at all; but to extend the argument, I am also asking why, even given such a step, the Soviet strategy should be as ambitious, and of course provocative, as it seems to be). In short, why should an East German revolt lead to an allout battle for West Europe?

Perhaps the answer is simply: for maximum deterrence, against any Western inclination to intervene in an East European or East German revolt. "Don't even think about it." Fine. Isn't the threatened and planned disproportionate response here just as irresponsible, reckless and foolish as NATO plans for first use of nuclear weapons?

Those NATO threats have led to a costly and dangerous buildup of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons on both sides. But haven't the Soviet plans--especially since the "modernization" of Warsaw Pact forces since the late '60's, also bear a large part of the responsibility for that strategic buildup, and for a vast conventional buildup on both sides as well?

SU as NATO What the hell has been going on here? If the realistic concern was simply to deter West Germany or US/NATO from unifying Germany by force, why was it ever necessary to build up a blitzkrieg capability for conquering West Germany and Western Europe as a whole?!

If a rearmed West Germany justified--in Soviet eyes, and perhaps in the eyes of some other Europeans--a continued Soviet military presence in East Europe and specifically East Germany--why would the containment of West Germany and the protection of the territory of the Soviet Union demand a readiness for a ground invasion of the West?

If Soviets should refer, for an answer, to traditional Soviet military doctrine, one would have to ask: Haven't they noticed that they are not starting, this time, from within their own borders, nor that they are unlikely to be pushed back to those borders by a German offensive, no matter how clever?

all now: = 70's + 80's: 12/1/80
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The fact is that whatever their reasoning, the combination of their posture in East Europe, their modernization and their maneuvers have validated the most ominous interpretations of the most suspicious Cold Warriors for over a generation, and provided the most plausible rationale imaginable--inadequate though I and other nuclear pacifists find it to be--for the threat of nuclear first-use. Thanks for nothing, guys.